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TO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 AMMAN 003476

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FOR NEA/I AND NEA/ELA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/18/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQI PARLIAMENTARIANS TELL CODEL BAIRD PM MALIKI
AND IRAN ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR IRAQ'S PROBLEMS

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During an August 10 visit to Jordan, Representatives Baird (D-WA) and Shays (R-CT) met with three Iraqi Sunni deputies resident in Amman; the Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan; and Vice President al-Hashimi. The deputies shared the view that progress in Iraq could only be achieved through the immediate removal of PM al-Maliki and the installation of a government of technocrats. They sought U.S. support for the formation of a new government and two deputies requested protection so that self-exiled Sunni members of the Iraqi Parliament could return to Baghdad. They also blamed Iranian interference in Iraq for the failures of the al-Maliki Government and continued instability. The Iraqi Ambassador and Vice President shared the deputies' concerns about Iran, voiced some concerns about the performance of the current Government, but argued that real power-sharing would help to unify the Iraqi people. END SUMMARY.

Iraq Needs a Government of Technocrats

¶2. (C) Iraqi Deputy Mohammed al-Dyneer (aka Daini) opened the hour-long August 10 meeting with Representative Brian Baird (D-WA) and Representative Christopher Shays (R-CT) by declaring that Iraq, both the Government and the people, as well as the U.S. were in deep trouble. He asserted the GOI did not reflect the will of the Iraqi people and was controlled by Iran. He said "U.S. support for the al-Maliki Government" had paralyzed Parliament, forcing many members to flee the country for safety and depleting Parliament of the quorum necessary to take meaningful action. He sought U.S. assistance in "getting rid of al-Maliki," and was confident that if the Prime Minister and "his militia" were removed from the picture, deputies would return to Baghdad to elect a secular government of technocrats. He accused al-Maliki of squandering millions of dollars slated for public works projects and sniped that the PM's "tea boys" had access to several armored vehicles while members of parliament did not. He advocated U.S. protection for the alleged 80 deputies living outside of Iraq so that they could return to Iraq to do their jobs. Responding to the U.S. representatives' questions about issues that needed immediate attention, al-Dyneer prioritized passage of the hydrocarbons law, reliable supply of electricity, de-Ba'athification, and empowerment of the federal government. Absent immediate action, al-Dyneer predicted a worsening of the security situation and the nation's economy.

¶3. (C) Turning to the U.S. military presence in Iraq, al-Dyneer said he, personally, was against an immediate withdrawal, a view shared by his "young, Sunni colleagues." He called for announcement of a withdrawal date, 2017 for example, coupled with a plan to boost Iraq's self-defense

capacity. A clear plan, regardless of the withdrawal timeframe, he argued, would convince Iraqis that the U.S. was not an occupier and thereby weaken the impact of the national resistance. He continued that if withdrawal were imminent, it had to be "with dignity, not like Vietnam." Al-Dyneer was ambivalent about national reconciliation, equivocating that it would happen "if the people really want it."

Iran Is the Source of Iraq's Problems

14. (C) In a separate meeting, Deputy Ali al-Sajri, a member of the United Iraqi Movement, echoed al-Dyneer's comments about al-Maliki and the lack of security for parliamentarians. He also voiced concern about Iran's role in Iraq, commenting that if the U.S. were to leave soon, "Iran will permanently invade" as part of its plan to control Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian territories, and Saudi Arabia.

15. (C) Similarly, Deputy Sa'ad Nhaif Hardan al-Dulami, a Sunni leader from Anbar province, said that the situation in Iraq is worsening, particularly because the Government is a "zero" and led by a dictator. He too blamed Iran for Iraq's problems, identifying the Minister of Immigration and the National Security Advisor as Iranians. Dulami criticized the USG for dis-arming the people of Anbar which he said led to the rise of Al-Qaeda in the region because the local people were unable to defend themselves. He said Al-Qaeda members are a mix of fundamentalists, Ba'athists and "guns for hire." Despite an unsafe past, security was returning to Anbar, in part because one "thug," Abdul Abu Sader, turned in the names of Al-Qaeda members in Anbar. Dulami added that Sunnis remain mostly pro-Al-Qaeda, but were cooperating with

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American forces because they too were concerned about regional security. Encouraging the U.S. to negotiate with Al-Qaeda, he recommended using Sunni resistance members as a conduit to Al-Qaeda members, explaining that resistance members were easier to approach and less fundamentalist. He concluded that in future meetings with senior U.S. officials, he could provide names of Iraqi resistance supporters who have access to Al-Qaeda members.

"This Parliament is Useless"

16. (C) Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan Sa'ad al-Hayani told the CODEL that the U.S. needs to establish a democratic system, something he believes cannot be done so long as fundamentalist Shi'as and Sunnis are in power. After four years, al-Hayani said that the only winners were the Iranians and the Iraqis, the biggest losers. He encouraged reconciliation and reform with parties that are becoming more nationalistic.

17. (C) When asked about Parliament, al-Hayani replied that "this Parliament is useless -- it is made up of incompetent, illiterate people" who were elected because Iraqis did not know for whom they were voting. He noted that parliamentary elections are not scheduled for another two years, but, according to the constitution, could be held after one year and that would be, in his opinion, an "excellent" development. Al-Hayani described the current state of affairs as a crisis of government in which "irrelevant" people -- specifically citing Talabani and al-Maliki -- were making decisions on behalf of the country.

18. (C) Al-Hayani asserted that the U.S. had a responsibility to re-establish a political process in Iraq because the U.S. did not get it right the first time. In his opinion, after 40 years of dictatorship, no nation would be prepared for three elections and Iraqis did not understand their constitution. The Iraqi Ambassador said the U.S. needed to restore the rights and potential for those who are excluded

under the current political process, especially the Sunnis. Al-Hayani claimed that the currently elected Sunni leaders did not represent the Sunni populace of Iraq and if they stood for re-election tomorrow, nearly all would be defeated. When queried about whether the al-Maliki government was capable of becoming effective without new elections, al-Hayani replied that al-Maliki has good intentions, but is weak and running a "country club for the Hizb al-Dawa." Real change would only come about following new elections. Al-Hayani maintained that when elections are held, the fundamentalists will lose because the religious authorities over-promised their followers. According to al-Hayani, as long as Sunnis are excluded from a meaningful parliamentary role, al-Maliki and anyone who succeeds him will fail. Al-Hayani believed that the Sunnis want to participate in the political process, but they want guarantees of reform before they will do so.

¶9. (C) Addressing the presence of Iraqi parliamentarians in Jordan, al-Hayani quipped that on any given day he has over 100 deputies in Amman and that he's "not running an embassy, he's running a country." In contrast to al-Dyneer's comments, he said many parliamentarians when in Iraq have dozens of bodyguards now and that additional protection is not likely to make a difference.

Iraqis Need a Symbol of National Unity

¶10. (C) During a late night August 10 meeting, Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi said it was time to think seriously about Iraq's circumstances and alternatives to the current situation. Mistakes had been made and troop withdrawal would cause the country to "slide into civil war."

In al-Hashimi's view, there were three steps to undertake: promotion of national accord to address differences over constitutional amendments, oil, and power-sharing, all in order to unite the people; agreement on a "watertight" regional security arrangement; and conclusion of an "international platform, under UN Chapter VII authority," to declare Iraqi unity and deter those who seek to interfere in Iraq. He argued that a national, symbolic project would unite Iraqi citizens who had forgotten that under Saddam Hussein, everyone suffered. In his view, current sectarian strife was not based on religious or ethnic differences; the problem was those in power -- "this Government broke the record of failure in every issue -- did not pursue a national agenda. He called for the restoration of the "only symbol of national pride, the army," and urged the U.S. to release

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detainees, except Al-Qaeda members, held at Camps Bucca and Crocker. Honoring a promise to release such detainees would, he believed, solidify the bonds among Americans and Sunnis now fighting together in Anbar and Diyala, leading to the destruction of the terrorist group and forming a barrier to Iranian further intervention.

¶11. (U) CODEL Baird did not clear this message.

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